

WE are Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (elca)

918 South Litchfield Road, Goodyear, AZ

Office: 623-932-2394

Website: www.christevangelical.org

Pastor Jeff Hackler (314)378-1330

WE WELCOME ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US TODAY.

ALL are invited to receive the bread and the wine. Please know that at CELC this common meal is for all who feel moved to receive. This sacrament is God's gift to all, and is not tied to membership, doctrine or creed.

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Sept. 20, 2026

9:00 AM

Service of Word and Sacrament

The Gathering

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PSALM: Psalm 145:1-8

The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. (Ps. 145:8)

¹ I will exalt you, my | God and king,
and bless your name forever and ever.

² **Every day | will I bless you
and praise your name forever and ever.**

³ Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised!
There is no end | to your greatness.

⁴ **One generation shall praise your works to another**

and shall declare your power.

⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty
and all your marvelous works.

⁶ **They shall tell of the might of your wondrous acts,
and I will recount your greatness.**

⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully of your righteousness.

⁸ **The Lord is gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.**

GATHERING ELW 593 *"DRAWN TO THE LIGHT"*



1 Peo - ple who walk in dark - ness have sought a light in the
2 How can we tell a heav - en from hell if ev - 'ry - one
3 Where is the sun? Oh, there will be none! The Lamb is the



heart of the dark - est night. Just when we thought all would be
dwells in the dark of night? Morn-ing dis - pels, gent - ly com -
one who is shin - ing bright, bids us to come! Life has be -



lost, we were drawn to the light of God.
pels, and we're drawn to the light of God.
gun when we're drawn to the light of God.

Refrain



Dawn is in sight! Gone is the night, drawn to the
 light and the morn - ing. Glo - rious and bright, oh, what a
 sight to be drawn to the light of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
 who pours love into our hearts
 and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
 let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,
 we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
 in the world and in our own hearts.
 Creation groans from overuse.
 Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
 Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
 Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love
 to others.

Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace. Amen.

PASTORAL GREETING

P The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

[Congregation is seated.]

The Word

1ST READING: Jonah 3:10—4:11

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

10 When God saw what [the people of Ninevah] did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

4:1 But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. 2 He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. 3 And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” 4 And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” 5 Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

6 The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. 7 But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. 8 When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

9 But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry enough to die.” 10 Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. 11 And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

2ND READING: Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

21 For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. 23 I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, 24 but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. 25 Since I am convinced of this, I know that

I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, 26 so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

27 Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel 28 and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. 29 For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, 30 since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: WOV 791 "ALABARE"

Alabare alabare alabare ami Senor
Alabare alabare alabare ami Senor

Sing with the people, the people of God,
and join creation in a joyful hymn
blessing and honor and glory and might
to God and to the Lamb be without end.

GOSPEL: Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the 20th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1 "The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. 5 When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. 6 And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you

standing here idle all day?’ 7 They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ 8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ 9 When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. 11 And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, 12 saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ 13 But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ 16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON: PASTOR JEFF

SONG OF THE DAY: PSALM 23 *“THE LORD’S MY SHEPHERD”*

1. The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

Refrain: And I will trust in You alone,
 And I will trust in You alone,
 For Your endless mercy follows me,
 Your goodness will lead me home.

2. He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

3. And though I walk the darkest path,

I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

A brief silence.

Hold your church accountable for our unwillingness to share your good news and our anger at your generosity to others. Nourish us by your grace to be witnesses to your love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Guide scientists and researchers studying responses to the climate crisis so that all your creation may inspire us to give thanks for your great goodness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Show employers the benefits of equal pay standards for all their employees. Reconcile conflicts between employees. Fill places of employment with camaraderie, and bring an end to employment disparity. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage any who cannot work or who cannot work a full day with the truth that their value comes from your everlasting love for them. Provide for those who are injured, ill, and for all in any need (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Strengthen all those in this congregation whose labor serves the needs of others in the community (*especially our Outreach program*). Inspire all in this congregation to support community endeavors with our time and talents. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

P: Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.
Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

The Meal

OFFERTORY / OFFERTORY MUSIC *E*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Let us pray.
God of creation,
you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly.
All blessings are from you;
make us generous with what we have.
Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts
in service to you and in love to our neighbors,
today and always. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,..
We praise your name and join their unending hymn...

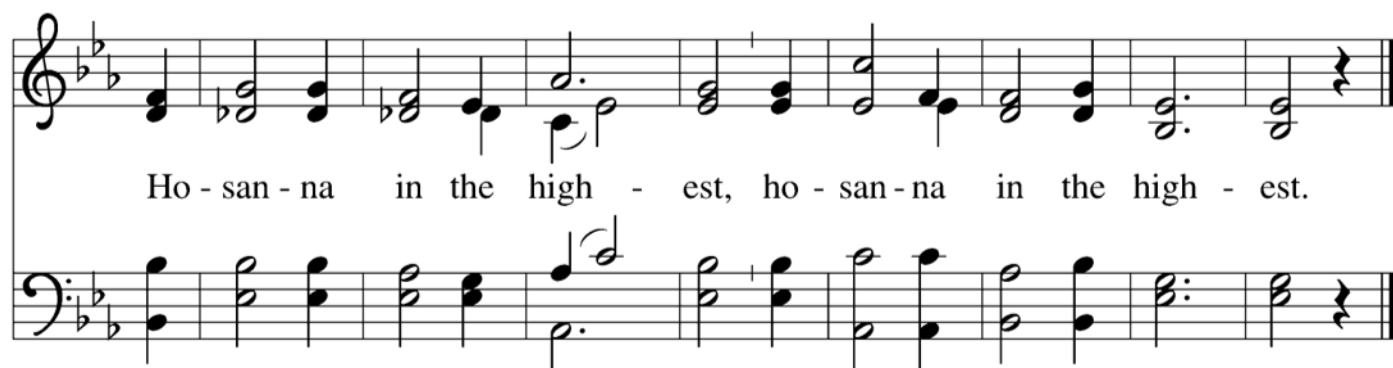
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav-en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.



Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. .Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

[THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE]

P on the night before he died...

Again, after supper ...

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup
we remember the incarnation of your Son:
his human birth and the covenant he made with us.

We cry out for the resurrection of our lives,
when Christ will come again in beauty and power
to share with us the great and promised feast. **Amen, Come, Lord Jesus.**

Send now, we pray your Holy Spirit,
that we and all who share in this bread and cup
may be united in the communion of the Holy Spirit,

may enter the fullness of the kingdom of heaven,
and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

**Through him, with him, in him, in the unit of the Holy Spirit,
All glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; **have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; **Have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; **Grant us peace, grant us peace.**

COMMUNION HYMN: ELW 487 "WHAT FEAST OF LOVE"



- 1 What feast of love is of - fered here, what ban-quet come from heav - en?
- 2 What light of truth is of - fered here, what cov - e - nant from heav - en?
- 3 What wine of love is of - fered here, what crim-son drink from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last-ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?
What hope of ev - er - last-ing life, what won-drous word is giv - en?
What stream of ev - er - last-ing life, what pre - cious blood is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.
This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav - en.
This, this is Christ the king, the sweet - est wine of heav - en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv - en!
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv - en!

PASTORAL BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

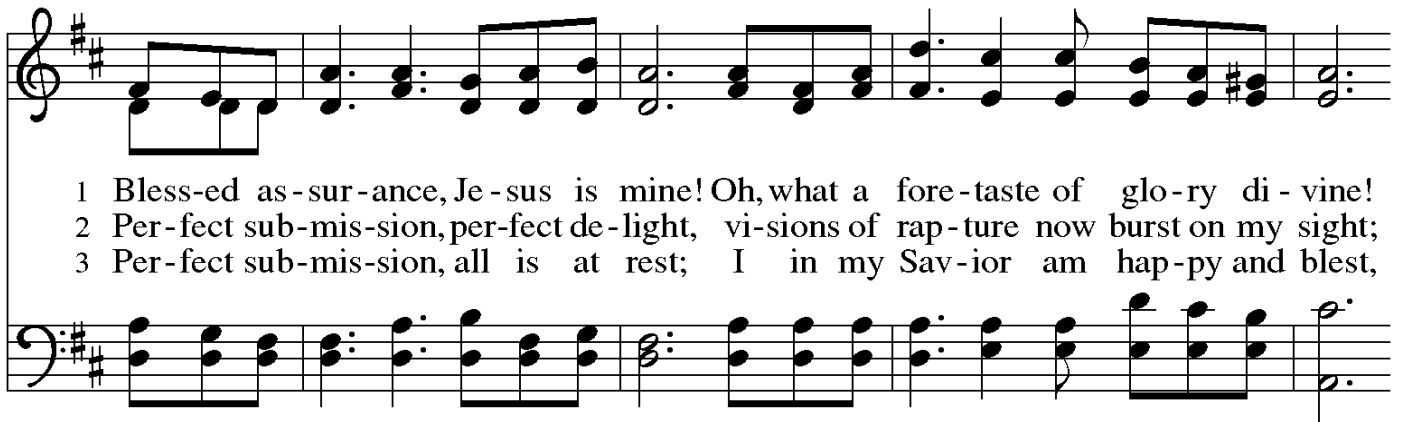
P: Let us pray.
Sustaining God,
with this bread and cup,
you nourish us with mercy and abundant life.
By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world.
Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love,
following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

The Sending

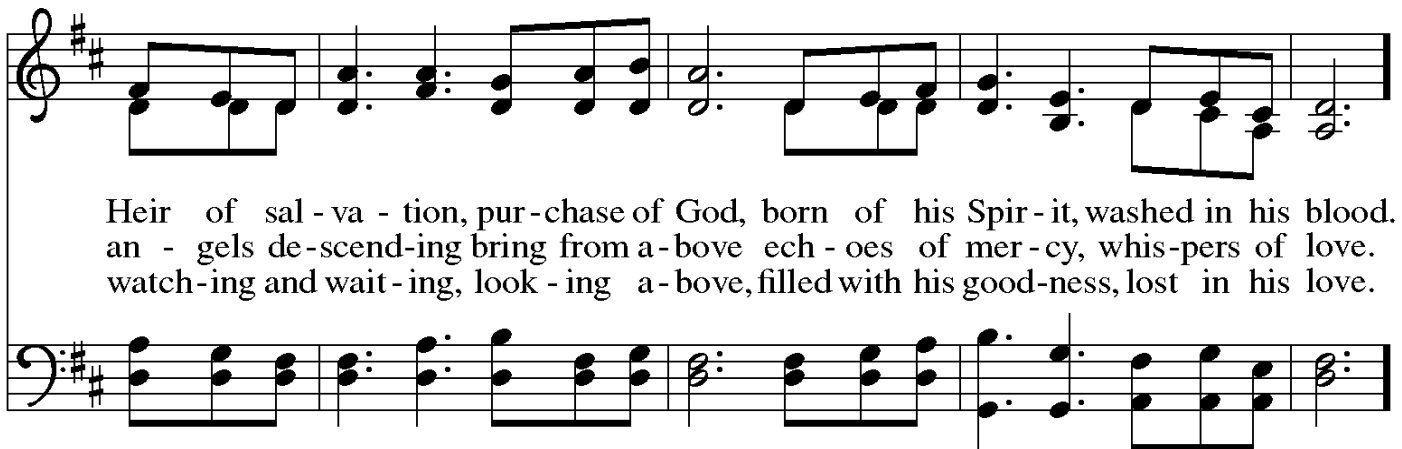
BENEDICTION:

P The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**
The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit. **Amen.**
The God of grace ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

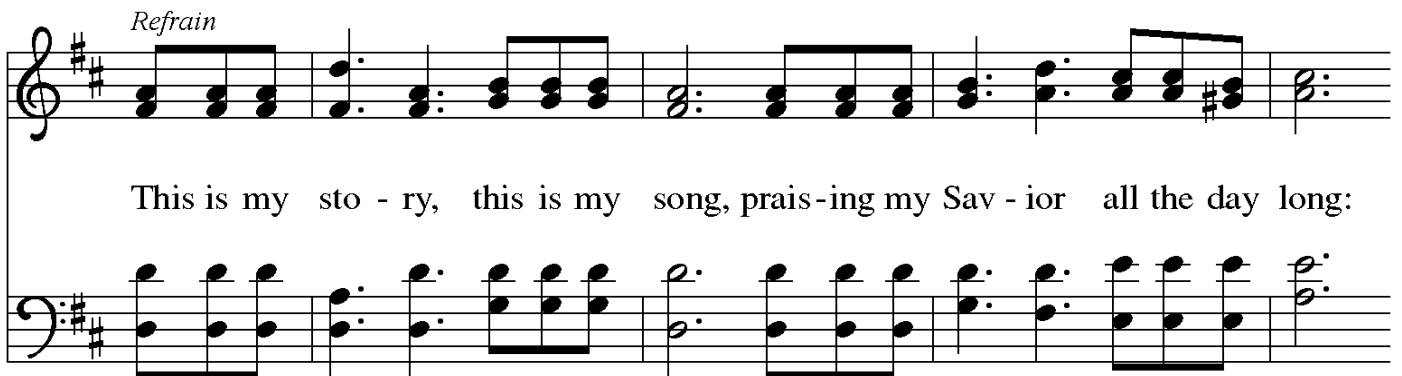
SENDING SONG: ELW 638 "BLESSED ASSURANCE"



1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.



Refrain
This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

DISMISSAL:

P

Go out in joy and be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

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